



Gc  
977.102  
M58w  
1761648

M. L.

REYNOLDS HISTORICAL  
GENEALOGY COLLECTION

J

GEN

ALLEN COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

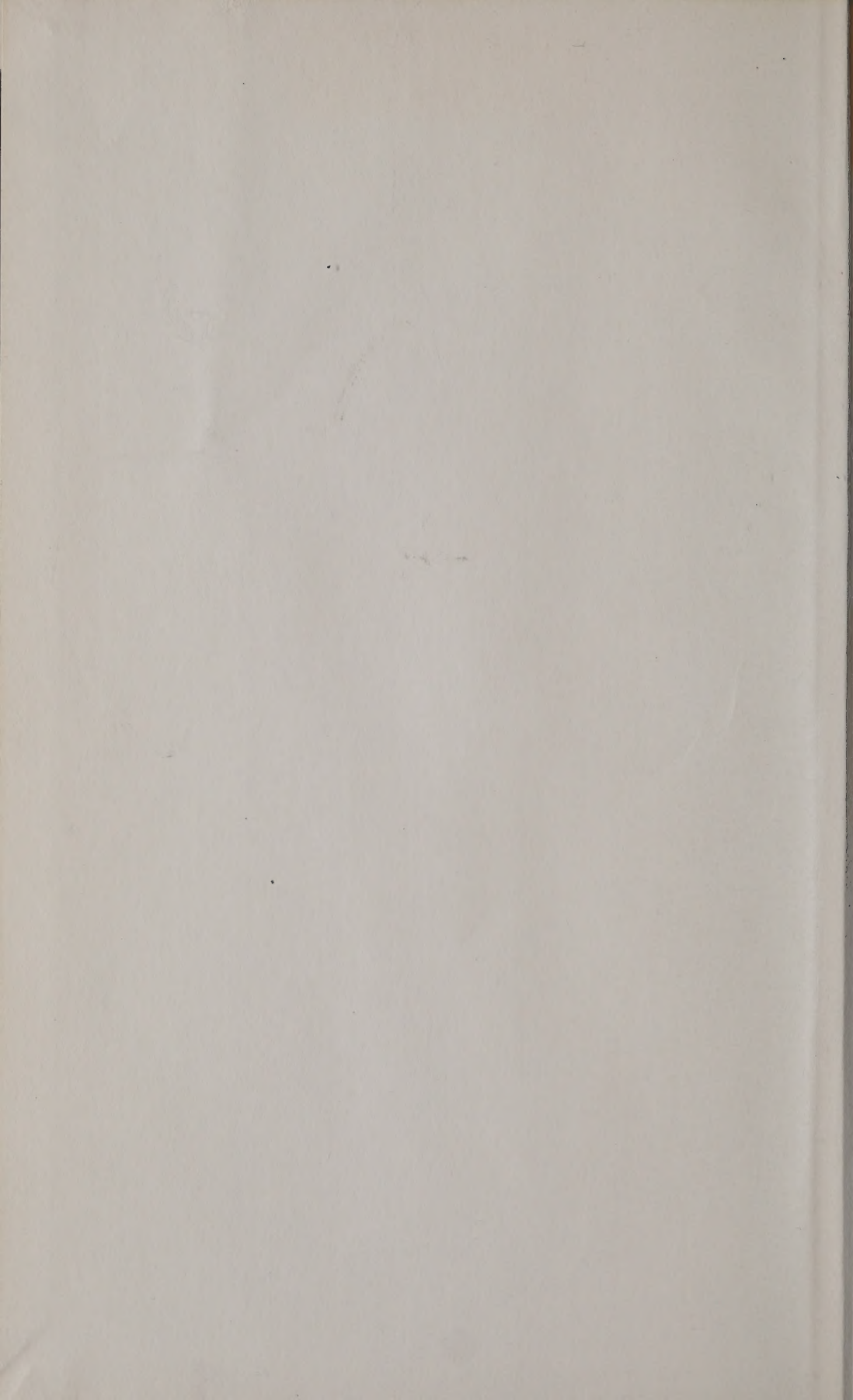


3 1833 02279 9511











One Hundred and Fifty Years

*Milan Township  
& Village*

**Birthplace of Thos. A. Edison**



*Building for the future*

*Homecoming and Melon Festival*

**1809**

**1959**

**PRICE: ONE DOLLAR**





## MILAN TOWNSHIP—1959

### *Points of Interest*

- |  |                                    |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Avery—J. Schlessman & Sons., Inc.          | 9. Old Cider Mill                  |
| 1. Homestead Inn                           | 10. First Homer Page Farm          |
| 2. Milan Inn                               | 11. Wonder Child Grave             |
| 3. Roadside Park                           | 12. Old Lower Locks                |
| 4. Clayton Meyers—<br>J. I. Case Machinery | 13. Site of Old Avery              |
| 5. Ed Stenger & Sons, Greenhouse           | 14 & 15. Former Erie Village sites |
| 6. Solvang Farms<br>P. Mortensen & Son     | 16. View of Milan Canal            |
| 7. A. J. Romp, Ford Tractor Sales          | 17. Milan Rod and Gun Club         |
| 8. Bill's Sohio—Gasoline & Service         | 18. Site of Parker Block House     |
|  | 19. Union Corners Church           |
|  | 20. Friends Church, Pages Corners  |



11-  
70410  
Milan Township  
and Village

One Hundred and Fifty Years



The History of Our Community from  
Pioneer Days to the Present

WALLACE B. WHITE  
Writer and Editor

DOROTHY RUSSELL, *Artist*

W. B. WHITE and RONNIE MACMURRAY, *Maps*

P. A. EWELL, *Photography*

MRS. ROBERT KELLER, *Advertising*

MRS. KENNETH MITCHELL, *Typing*

We are deeply appreciative of the cooperation of individuals and institutions for the loan of old pictures which have made a comprehensive pictorial presentation of our history possible.

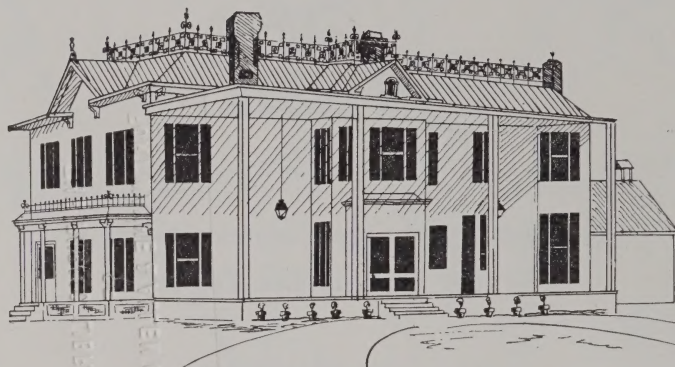
MILAN HOMECOMING & MELON FESTIVAL, INC.

Sponsored by The Milan Chamber of Commerce  
1959

Published by the Ledger Publishing Co. - - - Milan, Ohio

---

*Russell's*  
**HOMESTEAD INN**



HOMESTEAD OF LEVI ARNOLD - 1883

- Country Kitchen Food  
Friendly Service—Gracious Relaxing Atmosphere
- Steaks, Chops, Chicken, Sea Food
- Coffee Shop - Special Sandwiches and Salads
- Select Wines and Champagnes
- Private Dining Rooms
- Catering to Sales Dinners, Banquets, Wedding  
Parties and other Special Occasions

***Route 250 at the Turnpike***

Aircraft Landing Facilities

PHONE — MILAN 9-4271

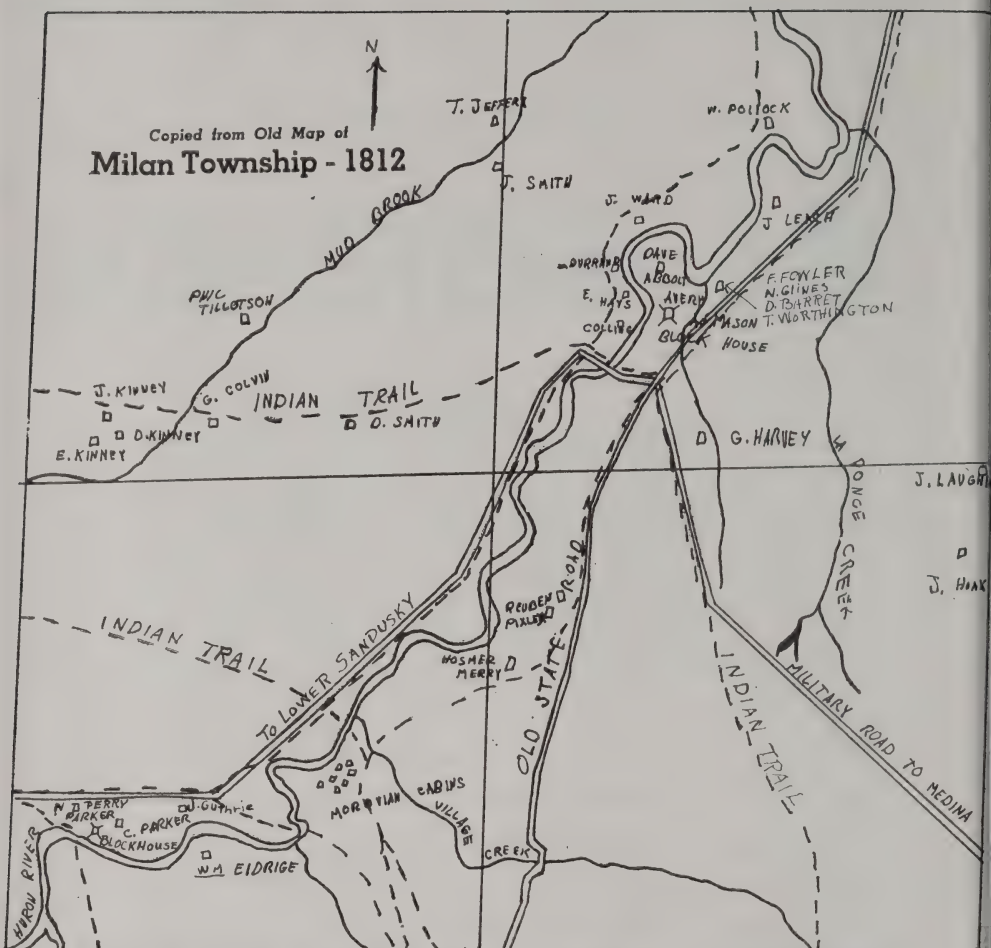
Open Daily 6 A.M. — 9 P.M.

---



## C O N T E N T S

Milan Township—1812 map and early history	4
Milan Village—1820	8
Thriving Pioneer Village—1830	10
Early Milan Architecture circa 1820-30	14
The Milan Canal	15
The Canal Basin	18
Old Public Square	20
Milan Architecture 1830-50	22
Edison Birthplace	23
Old Normal School	24
Present Educational Facilities	25
Milan Churches	26
Milan Library	28
Milan Museum	29
Milan Industry	30
Map of Milan showing points of interest	32
Shipbuilding and Transportation	34
Milan from the Air	38
Oldest Known Picture in Milan	40
Old Town Hall	42
Old Town Hall (after fire)	44
The Brick Brewery	46
Old Time Brewers	48
The Little German Band	50
Burning of Old Star Mill	52
Old Country Store	54
Milan Pool Hall	56
Ball Team of '09	58
Water Fight—1910	60
Races—1910	62



## EARLIEST KNOWN MAP OF MILAN TOWNSHIP

### *About the Map*

Through the kindness of a Clevelander who prefers anonymity, a copy of the above map was possible. Every effort has been made to reproduce it as accurately as possible. The cabins of J. Laughlin and J. Hoak are not where other information would place them. However, it is known that both lived for a time near Old Avery and these may have been earlier cabin sites.

\* \* \*

The woodcuts on the opposite page are reproduced from Steiner's original article in a Philadelphia magazine published in 1789. Bald Eagle creek is the East Branch of the Huron river. The site (Figure 1) is at the extreme southeast corner of the former state Raccoon Farm. The second site (Fig. 2) is on the Peter Williams farm and the ravine mentioned is at the western boundary of the farm.

## EARLY MILAN TOWNSHIP

Abraham G. Steiner, of Philadelphia, states that he came to what is now Milan Township in 1787 seeking Indian mounds and prehistoric village sites. His published reports locate two former



Erie sites. He also carved his initials on an old beech tree on the farm of Peter Williams which could be deciphered up until a few years ago. The carving read "A.G.S. 1787." This is the first written record of the visit of any white man to Milan Township.

In 1789, Moravians, led by Zeisberger, settled along the banks of the Huron river in Section 2 of the township. Their settlement was called New Salem. About four years later rising Indian hostility caused them to move to the Thames river in Canada.

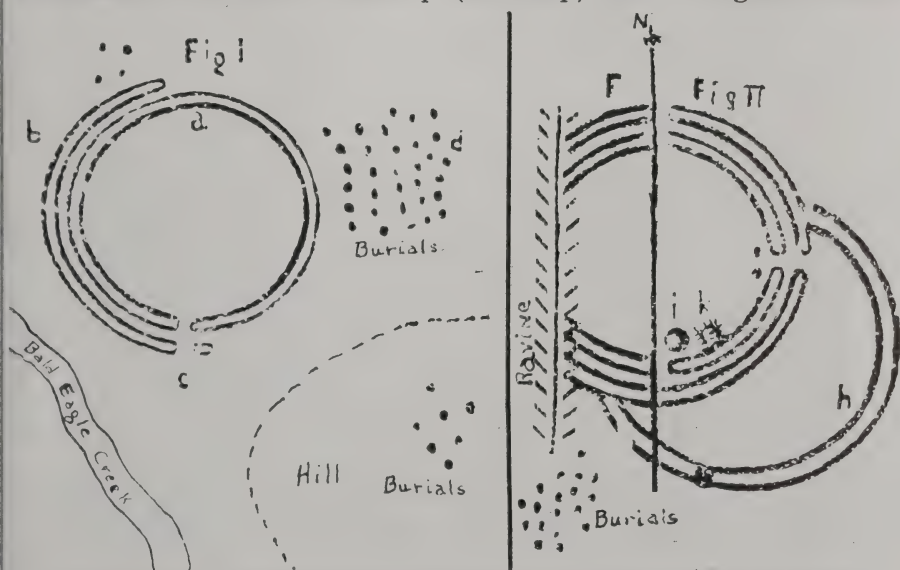
Later, in 1805, a portion of these Moravians, led by Reverend Frederick Christian Dencke, returned to the township, settling at the present site of Milan village. (See page 9 for greater detail).

Jared Ward is credited with being the first permanent resident in the township following settlement under the Fire Sufferers' Land Company. He came in 1809 and purchased his farm of David Abbott, who owned 1,800 acres including what is now called Fries Landing and Old Avery. The Abbott family moved here in 1810.

Between 1810 and 1812 more families came to the township, many of them tearing down and moving the older Moravian cabins to their own land. By the spring of 1812 the number of males, married or single, capable of bearing arms in the township was 47, according to old records. (See map for known locations).

Following Hull's surrender these families were thrown into a panic and most of them fled in groups to safer settlements when boatloads of Hull's surrendered army were seen approaching on Lake Erie. However, after one night of terror and confusion, during which a baby was killed by a felled tree, it was discovered that these soldiers were not an invading force of British and Indians, and most of the settlers went back to their cabins.

Thereupon, the returned pioneers began to organize their resources to withstand British or Indian attacks. They built two blockhouses in Milan Township (see map) and a brigade of Ohio



Reproduction of Steiner woodcuts. See page opposite for explanation.

militia was sent from Cleveland to Old Avery, the old county seat, to help in defending the frontier.

The hardships endured during this trying period are well told by surviving old settlers in papers gathered by the Firelands' Historical Society and published in the Firelands' Pioneers, complete files of which are available at the Milan Public Library.

Various accounts of the Battle of the Peninsula in which a detachment of about sixty soldiers and volunteers from Camp Avery met and defeated about twice their number of Indians are to be found in the above publication. This prompt and decisive action probably discouraged the Indians from further major forays against the settlers. With the exception of the Snow-Butler massacre at Cold Creek and the scalping of Samuel Seymour on the banks of Seymour Run in Ridgefield township, the Firelands were relatively free from Indian trouble.

After the War of 1812, settlers began to move again into the Firelands. The height of this movement was reached during the year 1817, when settlers from Connecticut finally outstripped those from other states. Prior to the War of 1812, only about 18% were from Connecticut, while over 30% were from the Ohio Western Reserve, nearly 30% from New York State, about 15% from Pennsylvania and the remainder from Canada.

Because Old Avery was county seat for the newly-organized Firelands, then called Huron County, it became Milan Township's first village, and, by 1817, numbered about 25 inhabitants. However, through some sharp political maneuvering, Platt Benedict and his friends managed to have the county seat moved to Norwalk. This plus the fact that no adequate millsite existed at Old Avery, caused the older settlement with its unfinished courthouse to be abandoned. Today the site of Old Avery is farm land.

Before the county seat was moved, however, one noteworthy event took place at Old Avery. This was the first criminal trial in the Firelands.

The courthouse was not yet completed, so the trial took place in the log school. The prisoner was a young girl from New London accused of infanticide. Because an important witness, a lady from Jessup (Florence), could not arrive on time, all the evidence could not be heard until late in the afternoon. At this time it was found that there was no place for the jury to retire to arrive at their verdict, so the prisoner was taken out of the jail and the jury installed therein. The jail door was not locked and half an hour later, when the bailiff came to take them to supper, it was discovered that the jury had gone home to do their milking. This is probably the first time on record when a prisoner was taken out of jail, the jury put in; then the jury ran off and the prisoner remained.

One other unsuccessful village was laid out in this part of the township—old Abbottsford. Its location is now known as Fries Landing. It was at the head of navigation on the Huron river. Two warehouses were built here in 1834, one by Hamilton Colton and the other by Ralph and George Lockwood. Lake vessels could



be loaded with wheat and wool at this point and shipped to the East. The area was also laid out in lots; however, when the Milan Canal opened, the warehouses were moved to Milan and the site abandoned. Seldon Colton was the only person born at Abbottsford.

Another point of interest in the township is at the junction of Hoover and Mason roads. The old farm here is the first one owned by Homer Page after he married a sister of Thomas Edison. An old red barn on the premises was pointed out by Edison as the one in which he sat on duck eggs when he was four years old. The old cider mill, where as a boy he got cider, is just down the road.

At the same crossroads is the grave of the "Wonder" child, one of the township's unsolved mysteries. In 1844 a two-year-old child was found wandering along the then heavily timbered banks of the Huron river. No adults were near it. It was taken to the Everingham home and cared for, but it went into a coma and died six days later. No one ever knew where it came from or how it got there.

Whether it was kidnapped and left or whether some emigrant family lost it or left it is still a mystery. A child of about the same age was kidnapped at that time in Galion, but a connection has never been established.

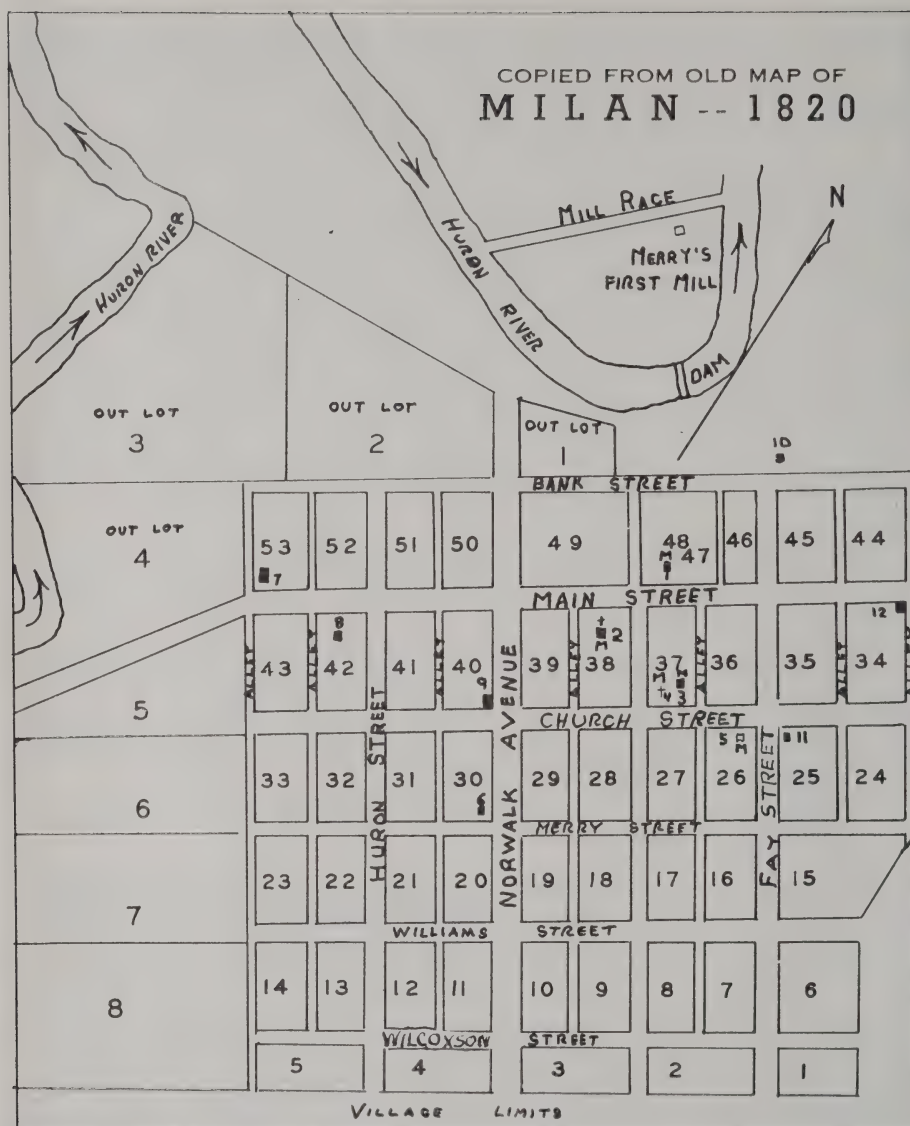
In the southwestern portion of the township on the Huron river is located the site of old Parker blockhouse where the Parker Rangers mustered during the War of 1812. Nothing is left of it now, but the site was on the State Racoon Farm just beyond the present dam of the Milan Rod and Gun Club.

Other points of interest in the township are mentioned in other articles in this booklet.



PHOTO BY P. A. EWELL

Marker for site of old courthouse on River road near Mason road.



- |                         |                            |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Cabin of Chief David | 7. Amos Park's House       |
| 2. Moravian Church      | 8. Lockwood Cabin          |
| 3. Moravian Mission     | 9. Moody Mears' Distillery |
| 4. Moravian Cemetery    | 10. E. Merry House         |
| 5. Moravian Cabin       | 11. Butman House           |
| 6. David Hinman's House | 12. Chapin House and Store |

The above is a copy of Merry's plat of 1817 to which documented sites have been added. Note that on this map and the one for 1830 present-day Front Street is called Main and today's Main Street is Norwalk Avenue. Edison Drive was Fay Street at this period. Interesting changes in the bed of the Huron river are indicated also.



## MILAN—1817-20

The first settlers at Milan were Moravians led by Rev. Frederick Christian Dencke. They came from the Thames river in Canada in 1805 and left during the year 1810. Early records show that their church was at the rear of the present hardware store; their mission house was just across the alley from the Presbyterian Chapel; and the cabin of Chief David was where Dr. Garnhart's offices were located later.

After the Moravians departed, Ebenezer Merry, in 1815, laid out a village to be called Beatty. The plat shows that it lay west of present Main street between Bank and Wilcoxson. It was never developed. Two years later Merry enlarged his projected village and, in 1817, recorded this second plat which was still called Beatty.

A copy of this early map may be seen in the Milan Museum. As will be noted, the revised map included the area between Bank street on the north and a line ten rods south of Wilcoxson on the south; while the east and west limits are about those of today. In 1819, the name Merry's Mills was suggested for the village, but a year later Milan was chosen.

In 1815, the township voted to change its name from Avery to Milan. The name Phoenix received the second largest number of votes. (Vol. I, Commissioners' Journal, Norwalk Court House).

In 1817, Merry completed his first mill and two frame houses were built in the village, one by Nathan Parks and the other by David Hinman. (See map). Outside the village limits William Cherry built in East Milan; while, a year earlier, Lemuel Sayles erected a cabin where the home of Charles Darrow now stands.

Subject to dispute is the frame house built by the father of John I. Butman. This is claimed as the first frame house built in Milan and John was born there in 1819. This house was remodeled in 1824 by Lyman Fay.

After settlers abandoned Old Avery in 1819, several came to Milan. Among them was Giles Chapin, who built on Lot 34. George and Ralph Lockwood also came to Milan that year from their farm on Old State road. They built a cabin on Lot 42 which burned that same year.

That year also, Merry built his first house and brought his family here. This building, since moved, stood north of Bank street, diagonally across from the present site of the Edison Birthplace.

A distillery was built where the Korner Store now operates. Another was built by Moody and Mears at the bottom of the hill near the river. Grain was turned into whiskey in those early days because it could be shipped more readily and at a greater profit than bulk grain.

The first school was taught, in 1819, by Roxana Whitney in the log Moravian church. Susan Williams also taught here. No churches had been built as yet.

Copied from Old Map of  
**MILAN -- 1830**



- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Carding Mill<br>(ox-treadle powered) | 18. Moore Tan Yard                |
| 2. Merry's first Grist and<br>sawmill   | 19. Tannery Shed                  |
| 3. George W. Choate                     | 20. Asa Sanford's (2nd House)     |
| 4. John Smith, the Joiner               | 21. Dr. A. B. Harris              |
| 5. Smith's Cabinet Shop                 | 22. Merry's 2nd House             |
| 6. Merry's First House                  | 23. R. Burt's Plow Factory        |
| 7. F. W. Fowler                         | 24. R. Burt                       |
| 8. Nathan Parks                         | 25. N. Standart's Ashery          |
| 9. E. Bates                             | 26. G. Chapin                     |
| 10. Stevens' Iron Foundry               | 27. J. and W. Wilson              |
| 11. C. B. Choate's Tinshop              | 28. A. Wood                       |
| 12. Wilcoxson Store                     | 29. J. Butman                     |
| 13. Exchange Tavern                     | 30. P. R. Hopkins                 |
| 14. Stables                             | 31. Daniel Hamilton               |
| 15. Jenkins' First Store                | 32. Hamilton Store                |
| 16. Andrews-Hyde Store                  | 33. J. Walker Harness Shop        |
| 17. Chapin's Store                      | 34. Eagle Tavern                  |
|   | 35. Henry Lockwood<br>Hat Factory |



## THRIVING PIONEER VILLAGE

Between 1820 and 1830 Milan grew rapidly. Several pioneer industries were started. The Sandusky Clarion of May 5, 1824 reports: "... The village of Milan . . . now contains 32 houses . . . two of brick; four merchantile stores, one tavern, two tanneries, three blacksmith shops, two tailors, two cabinet-makers, two cooperages, one gold and silver smith, one potter, one shoemaker, two wagon-makers, one sadler and one lawyer. It contains 280 inhabitants, two distilleries, one sawmill, and one gristmill . . . . "

In 1820, Frederick W. Fowler moved to Milan from Old Avery and, by 1821, had completed the Exchange Inn on the present site of Morrow's plumbing establishment. The stone portion of the old barn at the rear is part of the old stables and is still intact. Dr. Harkness came to town shortly afterward, taking rooms and offices in the tavern. His son Daniel, later to become a Standard Oil magnate, was born here.

Nathan Jenkins came about 1821 and built a store on Lot 49, Fraction 1, where the drug store now stands.

Ralph and George Lockwood built a frame store near the present site of Lockwood and Smith. Dr. Amos B. Harris built his store on the east side of the Square. Then Giles Chapin removed his stock of goods from his home and built a store just west of the present Odd Fellows building.

Simon Moore had a tanyard where the Milan Auto Supply now stands; while a second tannery operated in the ravine between Merry and Williams streets on the east side of town.

The distillery on the site of the present Korner Store was sold to Henry Lockwood who remodeled it for a hat factory.

The shoemaker was Peter Hough whose shop was near the rear of what is now Strong's filling station. South from him was the Collins blacksmith shop. At the back of Lot 29 on Merry street and the alley was cabinet-maker Charles Wilbor's shop; while his home was diagonally across Merry from it (Alden Emmons house). The other cabinet-maker was John Smith whose shop, later made into a house, was on Choate Avenue. His home was just north of it (now owned by Jesse Hite).

A blacksmith shop and wagon works, operated by Israel Waggoner was located where the Public Library now stands.

- 
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>36. Ralph &amp; George<br/>Lockwood Store</p> <p>37. Jenkins 2nd Store</p> <p>38. Ralph Lockwood</p> <p>39. Yellow School</p> <p>40. Henry Lockwood</p> <p>41. Ralph Daniels</p> <p>42. L. Bolsford</p> <p>43. Asa Sanford 1st House</p> <p>44. Daniel's Livery Barn</p> <p>45. Peter Hough's Shoe Shop</p> <p>46. Wilbor Cabinet Shop</p> <p>47. Waggoner Wagon Works</p> <p>48. Jared Ward</p> | <p>49. Dr. Lyman Fay</p> <p>50. Distillery</p> <p>51. Tan Yard</p> <p>52. Francis Kenyon</p> <p>53. Charles Wilbor</p> <p>54. Cornelius Bassett</p> <p>55. Patrick Kelley</p> <p>56. Delazon Dimon</p> <p>57. J. Stevens Sr.</p> <p>58. J. Collins</p> <p>59. Stevens</p> <p>60. George Lockwood</p> <p>61. Levi Wilcoxson</p> |
|---|--|

Charles B. Choate had a tin shop on Lot 50 at present-day Front street and the alley. The building was torn down years ago. George W. Choate, whose home was on grounds now owned by F. J. Kelble, built a carding mill on the flats—the old Yellow Mill. This was treadle-powered by oxen until 1836 when a new millrace was dug to Merry's second mill which stood north of it.

One of the tailors was Patrick Kelley whose first house was on the site of the home now owned by Jay Boss. The lawyer mentioned was Phillip R. Hopkins, whose home was moved when Geo. Curtis built the present residence of Willard Smyers.

The year 1823 saw the first agitation for a Milan Canal and a survey was made that year by Charles Wheaton.

The old Yellow school was built in 1824 and served as a meeting place for both the Presbyterians and Methodists until the old Presbyterian church was built in 1836-37 and the Methodist church in 1843. More will be said about Milan churches when their histories are given later.

Between the years 1824 and 1834 Milan more than doubled in population. New industries sprang up. A stage line, running between Sandusky and Columbus, connected it with the outside world. An Academy, the old Huron Institute, offered higher education to young men and women in the area. The Milan Canal had received its charter from the legislature (1827), but was not yet built. All in all, Milan was a very promising community.

In 1825, Richard Burt erected a plow factory on Lot 44 and built his home on the premises (present Earl G. Strong residence). After Burt's death the plow factory became a cooperage operated by Delazon Dimon who came in 1829.

In 1825 also, Guy Stevens built a small iron foundry and plow factory on Lot 51 (Ross Day property). This property was purchased by John Butman who soon moved the foundry to the foot of the hill, selling the Lot 51 site to McMillen and Standish who operated a wagon works there for a number of years. In 1834 Bliss Standish built his home on the north end of the property.

Levi Wilcoxson came to Milan in 1825 and opened a store on Lot 40, next to Choate's tin shop. His home was on Lot 2 and fronted on Wilcoxson street which was named for him.

In 1826, two three-story buildings were erected on the Public Square. They were the Andrews block (Wonder Bar) and the Hamilton-Standart store (Erie County Bank). The third story of the Andrews block was torn down by William Molt at the turn of the century.

Another tavern, the Eagle, was built where the Town Hall now stands. Seth Jennings was its proprietor. F. W. Fowler, owner of the other tavern, built his home on Bank street that same year. The stagecoach from Sandusky to Columbus changed horses at his Exchange Inn and brought in a good revenue.

The Huron Institute, later known as the Western Reserve Normal, was built in 1832 at the cost of about \$4,000. The Hamilton Annexation, including Broad street, was joined to the village and the dwellings of Rev. Everton Judson (Dorothy Russell home)



and Eldad Barber (sexton's house) were erected. Barber was the head of the Institute.

In this year also, Milan saw its first newspaper. A printer by the name of Tildens opened his print shop on the third floor of the Hamilton-Standart building and brought out the Western Intelligencer, a weekly publication. It lasted about two years.

Baxter Ashley opened his tailor shop on the west side of the Square. Dr. Stuart, a Yale graduate, built his drug store beside him. On the north side of the Square Conger and Boalt had their hardware store.

On February 23, 1833, Milan was incorporated by act of the legislature. The population of the village had reached 450.

This year, also, saw the building of a third tavern, the Mansion. Jenkins' first store was moved to the back of Fraction 1, Lot 49, to face on Bank street, and the new tavern occupied the frontage from the Andrews Building to the corner. Later, in 1853, when the Mansion burned, the old store was moved back to its former site and became Harter's drug store.

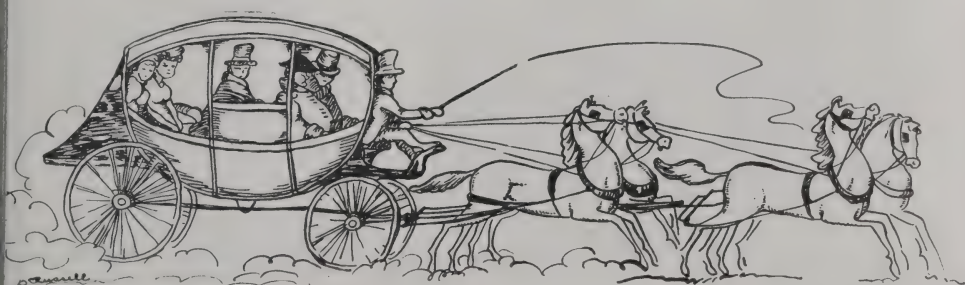
About 1833 an east-to-west stage line came through Milan. Its route was from Cleveland, through Elyria and Milan; thence to Bellevue, Fremont and Toledo. It followed present Route 113 through Milan and its stopping place was the Eagle Tavern.

A tow-path from Huron to old Abbottsford (Fries Landing) was completed in 1834 which enabled lake schooners to be towed up the river, facilitating the shipping of wheat.

Two years later, in 1836, the Canal Basin was excavated and the old covered bridge built. Work was now going ahead rapidly on the Milan Ships Canal and several thousand dollars worth of bonds had been sold to the Bank of Manhattan, New York City. An oil mill for the extraction of linseed oil was built on the flats near the river. This year also, the old brick Presbyterian church was built.

**The Ohio Gazetteer**, published in 1837, says of the village: "Milan, an incorporated post town of Huron County . . . is a place of considerable importance. It now contains an academy or high school, having a good reputation; a brick church, 6 or 8 stores, 3 taverns, 2 saws, a grist mill, oil mill, carding machine, fulling machine, drug store and a great number of mechanics shops . . . (population) about 600 or 700 inhabitants."

Milan was indeed a busy place. Its population was more than doubling every decade.



## EARLY MILAN ARCHITECTURE

The houses in Milan prior to the year 1823 were chiefly of the type of architecture known as "salt box." The home of Wayne



PHOTO BY P. A. EWELL

### Emmons House

Emmons is an example of them. This house, built originally by David Hinman, was moved to its present site by Ralph Daniels when he built his livery stable on its old site about 1829 or 1830.

example. Ornate doorways also characterize this style. Milan has several homes of this period, some of which have been described in architectural magazines. The second Butman house, built that same year, is another example.

In 1824, two other houses of this type were erected—the Dr. Lyman Fay house (corner of Church street and Edison Drive) and the Ebenezer Andrews home on South Main street, now



PHOTO BY P. A. EWELL

### Andrews House

owned by James Mowry. The vogue lasted in Milan until 1827 when the last pedimented-gabled home was built—the Daniel Hamilton house.

In 1829, the story-and-a-half "shoe-box" type with small windows beneath the eaves made its appearance. Examples of this type are the brick homes built by Guy Stevens, a Milan industrialist, and his brother. The Guy Stevens house may be seen at the corner of South



PHOTO BY P. A. EWELL

### J. Stevens House

Street and Edison Drive while the one built for his brother is at the corner of Berlin Street and Edison.





*Milan from near the Sandusky City Road.*

#### MILAN IN 1846

Townsend's distillery (foreground), Merry's mill, old covered bridge (right), warehouses, loading dock are shown. Edison's birthplace is obscured by a tree. The house on the extreme left is Geo. W. Choate's.

### CANAL BASIN

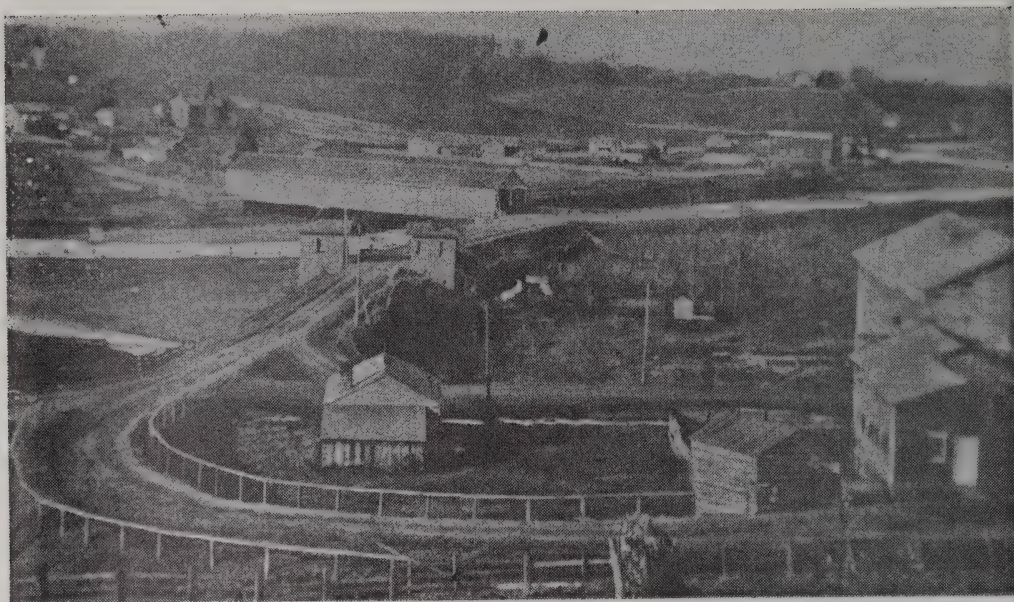
Although it was first surveyed in 1823, the Milan Canal was not completed until 1839. Between these years there was much bickering and disappointment. At first it was projected as a barge canal and Huron capital was interested; then, five years later, it was decided to make it a Ship's Canal and Huron capital was alienated.

The Canal Company was incorporated in 1827 and stock having a par value of \$50 was issued to the amount of \$35,000. In addition \$20,000 in bonds were sold. The Bank of Manhattan took most of the bonds, but the stock was sold locally. Because of dissension, work on the canal did not begin at once and the state legislature granted an extension of time for completion. Finally, in 1833, work began in earnest.

The first step was the construction of a tow path from the mouth of the Huron river to Abbotsford (Fries Landing). Lake schooners could be towed up the river to this point. From here to Milan the canal had to be dug all the way. The tow path to Abbotsford was completed in 1834.

In 1836, enough money was advanced to build the Canal Basin at Milan. This was done by digging out the old river bed for the basin, then shunting the river to flow through Merry's old mill race, its present bed. A covered bridge was built where the present bridge stands and a dam made about two hundred and fifty feet below it. Merry then built his second mill just north of Choate's





COURTESY MILAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

### Canal Basin in 1868-'69

This old photograph reveals that the first two warehouses have been removed. The weighing shed, Jenkins' warehouse, the toll houses, covered bridge, the old dam (partially destroyed) and the mills are shown.

---

carding mill (old Yellow mill) and dug a new race to bring water to it. The carding mill changed to water power at this time.

For detail concerning the excavation of the canal anyone interested is referred to the minutes of the Milan Canal Company in the Milan Museum and the minutes of the Town Council in the Public Library. The canal was about forty feet wide, thirteen feet deep and three miles long. The fall was only seven feet for its entire length; therefore, only two locks were necessary. The Upper Lock was about a mile from the basin and the Lower at the junction of the canal and the river. The tow path was on the north (left-hand) side of the canal. The Wheeling and Lake Erie railroad follows it for most of its length, today.

The canal was officially opened July 4, 1839, when the Schooner Kewaunee, Captain Moran commanding, anchored in the basin. More than 10,000, it was estimated, came from miles around to witness the event.

The effect of the canal was immediate. The whole area west as far as Wood County, south almost to Columbus and east beyond Wayne County now had ready access to markets. An interesting record exists describing a company from Marion, Ohio, of about fifty grain wagons which annually made the trip to Milan.

The growth of business was rapid. The Colton and the Lockwood warehouses at Abbottsford were moved to Milan. Others were constructed as rapidly as possible until in a year or two thirteen, one a double warehouse, were built along the south side



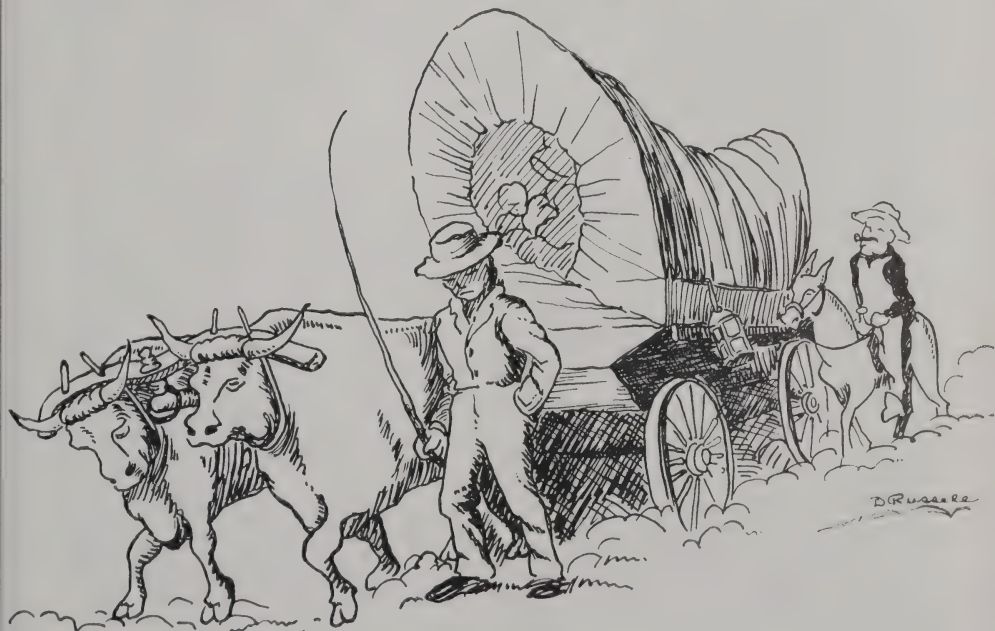
of the Canal Basin. They had a combined storage capacity of over 300,000 bushels of wheat. Henry Howe, an early Ohio historian records that, in 1846, he saw as many as twenty vessels moored in the basin or waiting to be loaded with grain.

By 1847, Milan's shipping had grown until nearly a million bushels of wheat and over a million bushels of corn were loaded. Milan, also, by virtue of its ships' canal, was designated as a port on Lake Erie. Old port records (now in the Milan Museum) indicate ships and cargoes which came in or went out. Besides grain, including wheat, corn and oats, such items as hogs, cattle, lumber, barrel staves, potash (from the asheries), whisky and wines were shipped.

Some of this cargo, like barrel staves, went on sailing vessels which crossed the Atlantic to English ports. In 1849, some 49 vessels left Great Lakes' ports for Europe and other Atlantic shipping points.

With trade amounting to several millions of dollars a year pouring through her port, Milan experienced a boom seldom equalled even in Western gold rushes. At the height of the wheat harvest, grain wagons lined the roads entering the village. In 1847, it is recorded, six hundred wagons made up a line extending from Milan to Blue Fly Inn on the old plank road (Route 601), a distance of over six miles. Thirty-five thousand bushels of wheat were handled in a day.

Estimating three ton or 100 bushels to the wagon, which is high, this means that 350 wagons were unloaded. There are 720 minutes in twelve hours; therefore, empty wagons must have driven away from old Water Street at the rate of one every two minutes. The traffic at that time is almost beyond imagination.



## CANAL BASIN

The Canal Basin, according to early records, was about 600 feet long, 250 feet wide and 15 feet deep. The following warehouses lined the south side of the basin:

Lot 64—E. Andrews Warehouse  
Lot 65—Thos. Butman,  
Lot 66—N. Jenkins  
Lot 67—F. W. Fowler  
Lots 68-69—Smith & Walker  
Lot 70—Smith & Walker  
Lot 71—H. Colton

Lots 72-73—D. & T. Hamilton  
Lot 74—R. & G. Lockwood  
Lot 75—R. & G. Lockwood  
Lots 76-77, Stephen Young  
Lots 78-79—D. & T. Hamilton  
Lots 80-81—A. & J. McClure

As will be noted, there were thirteen warehouses, one of them (the D & T Hamilton on lots 72 and 73) was a double structure and has sometimes been counted as two buildings.

A unique feature of the Jenkins warehouse (present Bagley Lumber building) was that a trestle and rails upon which a small car ran connected the third story of the warehouse with a weighing platform situated on the side of the hill about where large gasoline storage tanks may be seen today.

As wagonloads of wheat were weighed, the bags of grain were loaded upon the car and transported to the bins which were on the third floor. Wheat from the bins was then run by gravity to the lower floors and finally on board ships moored in front of the building. The car may still be seen at the warehouse.

It is stated that Edison as a boy of about six years of age was playing with other older children around the warehouse. They were riding upon the car and running around the bins. Suddenly Edison lost his balance and fell into one of the bins of wheat.

He began to sink in the grain exactly as a body sinks in quicksand. The screams of the other children brought a workman, who held Edison's head above the wheat until other men could come with shovels and dig him out. Edison, himself, has related the story and stated that he came near perishing in that wheat bin.

After the canal ceased to function, the old warehouses went to ruin. Some were torn down and rebuilt into barns by farmers. Two furnished timbers for the present Catholic church. One, which stood on Lot 75 and was owned by the Lockwoods became a canning factory and survived well into this century. The remaining building, as has been stated, is still used by Bagley Lumber company.

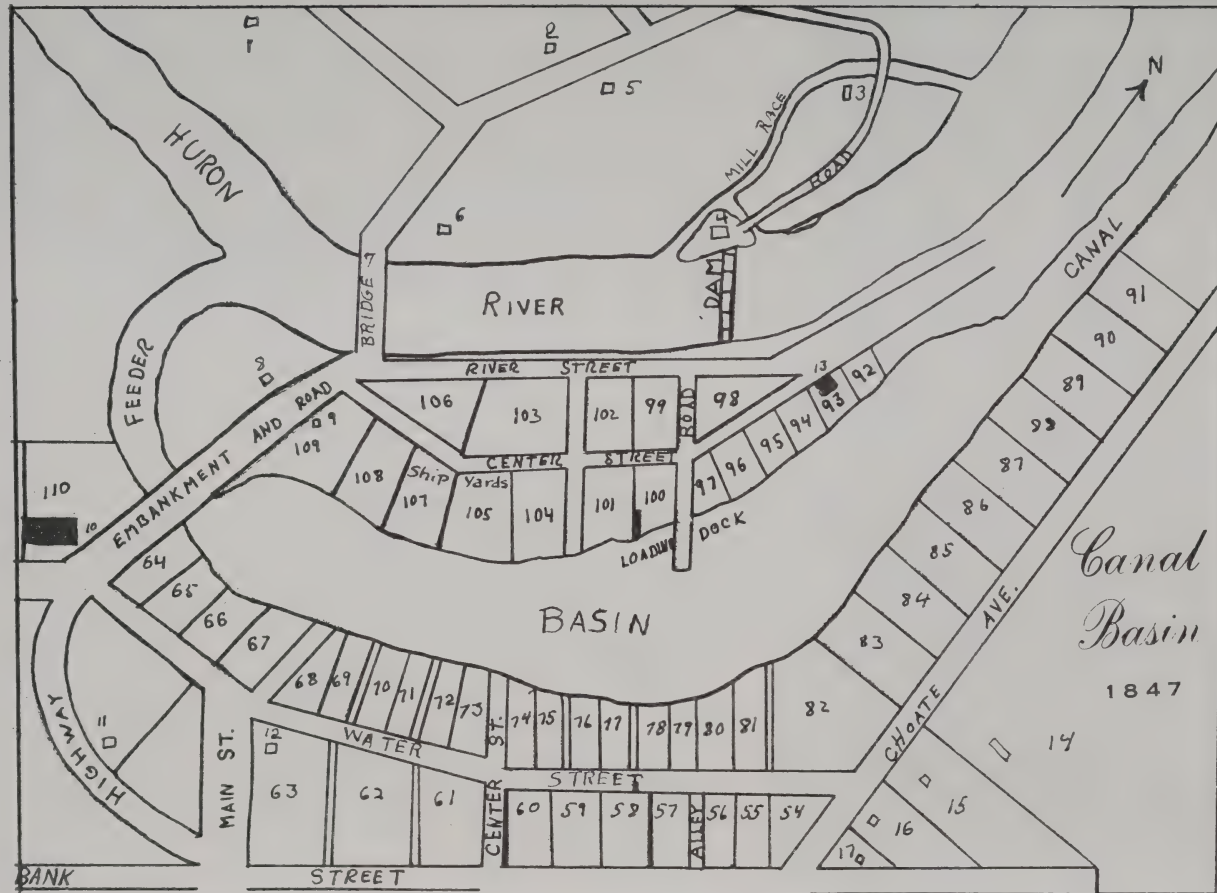
There has been some confusion in the past concerning the various buildings erected by Ebenezer Merry. The so-called Merry house on Route 250 was the third home occupied by the family and was completed in 1837. Also, the site now identified with Merry's Mill is the site of his second mill. His first already has been identified.

The home of George W. Choate stood on property later owned by James Cannon Lockwood (present Kelble home), but faced south instead of west. It burned in 1851, at which time J. C. Lockwood built his first brick house on the property. This had a mansard roof added in the 1880's.



# MAP OF CANAL BASIN AND RELATED BUILDINGS Circa 1847

1. James Gay House
2. Merry's 3rd house
3. Merry's 2nd Mill
4. Choate carding mill
5. Brick Building
6. House
8. Toll House
9. Toll House
10. Butman Foundry
11. Scale Shed
12. Smith & Walker Warehouse (later Winchester's Mill)
13. Lemon & Severs Slaughter House and Soap Factory
14. G.W. Choate's house
15. John Smith, joiner
16. Smith cabinet shop
17. Merry's 1st House, now home of Seth Jennings
18. F.W. Fowler house





COURTESY MILAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

**Old East Side of Square**

## OLD PUBLIC SQUARE

The impact of this amount of trade upon Milan was terrific. Not only was grain sold here, but supplies were bought. Milan prices, because of lower transportation costs, were lower than the prices in the interior.

Luxuries like cashmere shawls, fine china, silks and imported gloves were stocked. Variety stores, (today we would call them delicatessens) catered to starved epicurean appetites with brandied peaches, brandied cherries, pickled oysters and other rarities which only large cities could furnish.

Every General Store had a keg of whisky in the back room from which customers were given a free tin cupful before trading.

Brawls on the Public Square were common and often rival crews of shipbuilders from the ship yards staged gang fights by way of additional diversion. Milan had a reputation as a wild town throughout the state.

The three illustrations on these pages indicate about how the Public Square looked in 1847. No pictures exist of the old west side of the Square which burned out on March 22nd, 1852. Issues of the old Milan Tribune show that this side of the Square contained thirteen frame buildings, many of them with false fronts, ranging from a story and a half to two stories high. In addition there were three taverns and an unknown number of pot houses where drinks could be purchased for as little as three cents for four ounces of liquor.



COURTESY MILAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

**Old Presbyterian Church**





COURTESY MRS. ROBT. SAYLES

### Old South Side of Square

During the "Wheat Rush" the Square was a sandy hitching lot, as the pictures indicate. It was also a gathering place for early wagon trains setting out for the West. In 1842, what was to be the nucleus of the first large wagon train to reach Oregon was started from here under the leadership of Rev. Elijah White. Another train left in 1846 and a third in 1849. An uncle of Thomas A. Edison was with the last mentioned.

Near the Square was the old Presbyterian church of which old Milan was justly proud. Mention of this landmark has been made elsewhere in this booklet.

One other structure near the Square should be mentioned. The so-called Lockwood Temple which was erected in 1849 by George Lockwood. Items in the old Milan Tribune indicate that Lockwood was attempting to found a religion which evidently had some relationship to the Millerites. A former cupola on the building was to provide egress for the elect as they ascended to heaven when the earth was destroyed, a catastrophe which they believed impending. The "Temple" is now a storehouse.



COURTESY MRS. WAYNE EMMONS

### Old North Side of Square

## MILAN ARCHITECTURE (1830-1850)



PHOTO BY P. A. EWELL

**Jenkins House**

ample. It was built in 1836.

A later development of this type is to be found in the home constructed for Zenas King about 1847 to 1848. (Present Fenn residence on Center street at Judson).

In the years between the building of the Jenkins and the King homes, another phase of architecture came to Milan—the neo-gothic. It is characterized by “ginger bread” trimming, particularly on and about the front gable.



PHOTO BY P. A. EWELL

**Zenas King House**

During the 1830's new types architecture came in vogue. The overhanging gable supported by pillars, or ambulatory, made its appearance. The Colton house, built about 1834, is an example.

At first the pillars were square and the porticoes modest, but by 1836, when Nathan Jenkins built on Lot 53 (present Moore home on West Front street) this style reached its height. The pillars were tall and stately and two stories high.

The old Presbyterian church which burned in 1888 was another splendid ex-



PHOTO BY P. A. EWELL

**A. P. Mowry House**

A very charming example of this type is the home of A. P. Mowry built in 1838. (Now owned by Clifford Sickinger).

In 1847-48, square homes began to appear in Milan. Two examples of these are the houses George Lockwood built for two of his daughters when they married. Both are on Williams street, west of Huron. The present Meacham residence is one and the locally-known Captain Kelley home is the other.





PHOTO BY P. A. EWELL

## EDISON BIRTHPLACE

There is some evidence that Samuel Edison came to Milan about 1839, but he did not move his family here from Vienna, Canada, until about 1840. The lot on which the Birthplace stands was purchased by Nancy Edison, mother of the inventor, in August of 1841. It is probable that the Birthplace was completed in 1842.

Samuel Edison, the inventor's father, made shingles, worked on the old plank road (present Route 601), and carried on a small commission business, chiefly in lumber. The inventor, Thomas Alva Edison, was born February 11, 1847.

Attending physician was Dr. Lehman Galpin whose home is the present Milan Historical Museum.

Thomas was the seventh of the children. The others were Marion W., the oldest, William Pitt, Harriett Ann, Carlisle S., Samuel O., and Eliza S. The last three died in childhood and are buried in the Milan cemetery. The Edisons left Milan for Port Huron, Michigan, about 1853.



Thomas and his sister, Harriett Ann





COURTESY MILAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

**Old Milan Normal School—1869**

## **OLD NORMAL SCHOOL**

By 1830 need was felt by Milan people for higher education. In 1831 an act of incorporation was obtained for the founding of the Huron Institute. Half of the money, four thousand dollars, was to be raised by churches of the Huron Presbytery and half by residents of Milan.

Through the efforts of Rev. Everton Judson and others the money was raised. The building was completed by December 1832.

The school was opened before the building was completed and first classes were held in the offices of John Smith at his tannery (site of present Milan Auto Supply).

Eldad Barber was the first principal. The school was in operation a year before the opening of Oberlin College.

After 1851 the Institute was able to operate only sporadically until 1858 when Rev. Asa Brainard and Prof. Samuel Newman leased the building and established the Western Reserve Normal School. The school suspended operation in 1889.

After this date the old school was used from time to time by the newly-founded High School. Harold Bell Wright, a popular novelist in the 1900's, is said to have gone to school here. The building was torn down in 1910.





PHOTO BY P. A. EWELL

### **Milan Elementary, Junior and Senior High School**

## **MILAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

As the population of Milan grew, the need for bigger and better schools became more insistent. It was not long before the little log Moravian church became too small and, by 1824, the old Yellow school was built.

At first, as has been said, the Yellow school served as a school on week-days and as a meeting place for both the Presbyterians and the Methodists on Sunday. However, it was not long before the capacity of the Yellow school was outgrown and one-room school houses began to spring up in various locations, both in the village and township. The schools were not graded and teaching had not, as yet, become highly specialized.

This condition prevailed until the Public School Act of 1849 when state support and supervision of schools began. As a result the Union School was built in 1850. The main building stood across Center street from the present school on property now owned by Mrs. Neil Jones. This building was later sold to Steven Lockwood who used it for several years as a ball-bat factory.

Records fail to show that Thomas A. Edison went to school at Milan; although his two older sisters and a brother did. The Edisons left Milan before Thomas was seven years old.

In 1884, a larger school was needed and was built where the present building stands. This was replaced by a more modern structure in 1922. Additions were made in 1953 and 1958, so that, today, Milan has a fully adequate and well-equipped building to fill the needs of the 795 pupils enrolled there last year.

The present Executive Head of the school, Charles J. Lindcamp, reports a staff of 35 teachers who teach a kindergarten of 75 pupils, an elementary division of 356, a junior high of 162 and a senior high having 175 students. Courses offered include a general course, college preparatory, business education, vocational agriculture, home economics, industrial arts and, in addition, music and art. The laboratories are well equipped and there is an adequate gymnasium.

## MILAN CHURCHES



**Edison Memorial Methodist Church**

The Edison Memorial Methodist Church traces its origin back to William Gurley, who organized a church at Bloomingville in 1811. In 1816, meetings were held in homes at Milan until the Yellow School was built in 1824.

A church was built in 1843 across the street from the school. This became the "Steeple Mill" after a new brick church was built on the site of the present one in 1892. This edifice burned in 1930 and the Edison Memorial erected in 1937.

At present the Methodists have over 400 active members with various Church and Church School groups meeting during the week. Rev. Alva W. Taylor is the minister.

### **Presbyterian Church**

The Presbyterian Church traces its origin back to meetings held at Spears Corners about 1816. In 1824, meetings at Milan were held in the old Yellow School.

In 1836, the first church was built on the site of the present one and was destroyed by fire in 1888. The present church building was dedicated in 1890.

The membership, at present, is about 170 and Sunday School attendance about 60. Student Minister William H. Hunt conducts services.

### **Catholic Church**

St. Anthony's Catholic Church was organized at Milan in 1862 and a church built in 1866. This building has been remodeled recently. Active lay groups are:

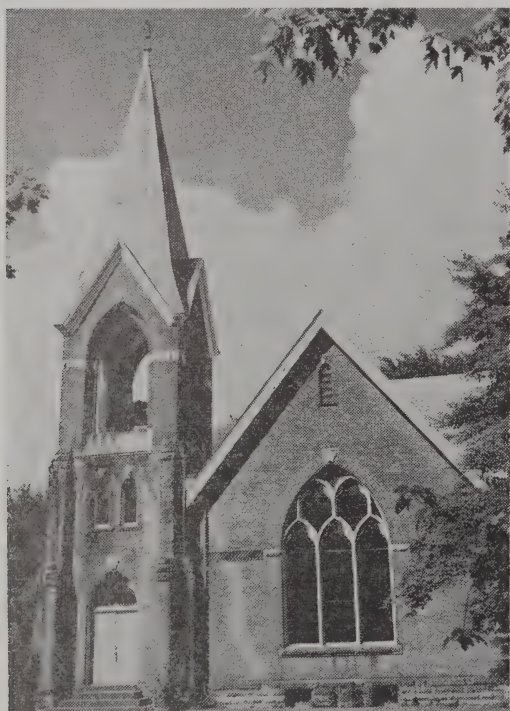
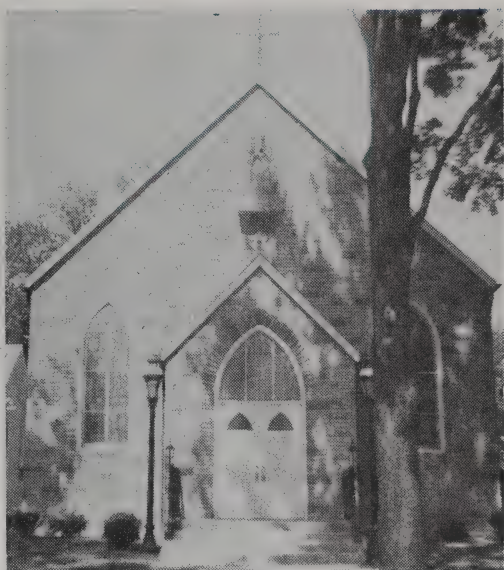


PHOTO BY P. A. EWELL

**Presbyterian Church**





COURTESY JAMES MAC MURRAY

**St. Anthony's Catholic Church**

### **Lutheran Church**

Saint John's Lutheran Church at Union Corners was organized in 1865 and a frame building erected which burned in 1913. The present stone church was dedicated in 1915 and an annex added in 1953. Present membership is 210. Organizations include a Junior Mission Band, the Luther League, Daughters of Saint John, the Ladies' Missionary Society and the Men's Brotherhood. Rev. William



*St. John's Lutheran Church*

UNION CORNERS

Councilmen for the Parish, Holy Name Society and the Altar and Rosary Society. The church has over 400 members. Rev. James McGowan is the pastor.

### **Pages Corners Friends**

The Milan Friends Church was organized by early settlers who met in homes until a church was built at Pages' Corners in 1879. The present building was erected in 1897. The congregation numbers about fifty members and the Ladies' Missionary Auxiliary and the Youth Christian Endeavor are affiliated. Rev. John P. Brantingham conducts services.



**Friends Church at Pages Corners**

R. Lucht has been pastor since 1924.

### **Berlinville Friends**

Located at the corner of Wikel Road and Route 113, this church was established 1880. It has a membership of about forty and a Sunday School attendance of between 45 and 50. The pastor is Rev. Earl Cosand.



## MILAN LIBRARY

Milan's first library was started in one corner of the drug store of Dr. Morgan Stuart in 1846. This service was continued after the death of Dr. Stuart by Case who bought the store. Later H. L. Wilson took over; then F. H. Weaver moved the library to his jewelry store.

Dr. P. A. Gordon formed a library association to continue the service after Weaver and, in 1891, the township levied a one-tenth-mill tax for the support of the institution. The library was moved to the town hall. The levy was increased to three-fourths of a mill in 1909.

Through the efforts of A. L. Hoover and William A. Galpin who donated the ground, money was secured from the Carnegie fund and the present building was erected. It was dedicated in 1912.

Miss Louise Hawley, who had served as librarian since 1908, became the librarian of the new library. Under her guidance the library continued to grow in the various departments which included a Children's Room, a Reading Room and a Reference Room. Miss Hawley retired in 1945 and Mrs. H. G. Beare (nee Caroline Croft) succeeded her, serving until 1949. Mrs. Charles Lamley followed, and served until 1954 when she retired because of ill health.

Mrs. H. C. Esgar, the present librarian, reports that the number of volumes now is 11,648 with an annual circulation of 41,337. Assistant librarians are Mrs. Kenneth Mitchell and Mrs. Ellen Zimmer.

The direction of the institution rests with the Library Board of Trustees having the following membership:

Mr. C. R. Keller, President

Mr. Merlyn Miller, Vice President

Mrs. L. K. Peabody, Secretary

Mr. George Morrow

Mr. Clifford P. Sickinger

Mrs. John Gastier

Mrs. Fred Dietzel





PHOTO BY P. A. EWELL

### THE MILAN HISTORICAL MUSEUM

The Milan Historical Museum as a branch of the Public Library was opened May 1, 1955. The museum is housed in the former home of Dr. Lehman Galpin, an early Milan physician who attended Mrs. Edison when the inventor was born. The home was built in 1846.

The museum contains an excellent collection of early Milan relics, including records of the old Milan Canal and ledgers of early Milan merchants. In addition, there is the Mrs. Mildred Smith Coulton doll collection, said to be one of the finest in existence. One, a leather doll, came to the Western Reserve in a covered wagon.

The Glass Room contains the Robert D. Mowry collection of glassware, representing the evolution of that industry from the blown glass of earlier centuries through the colored art glass of the 1880's. Other items of glass have been donated.

Besides the above, the Museum has a gun collection, the reproduction of a pioneer kitchen, an authentic blacksmith shop, tools used in building early Milan ships, old costumes, the flag flown from the first vessel to enter the Milan Canal and numerous other exhibits. The building is open from April 15 through October from 1 P.M. to 5 P.M. except Mondays. No charge is made to visitors. Mrs. Wade Roberts is curator and Mrs. Herman Collman, hostess.

Committee: Robert D. Mowry, chairman; Mrs. Louis H. Dorr, vice-chairman; Mrs. Gerould R. McWane, recording secretary; Mrs. Edward Collister, corresponding secretary; James G. Mowry, treasurer.

## MILAN INDUSTRY

The growth of industry in early Milan is typical of pioneer villages. First came the saw and grist mill; then the ashery and then the distillery.

In early pioneer times nearly every home had an ash hopper. Stones, covered with wheat straw lined the bottoms of the hoppers and wood ashes were strewn on top. Then water was ladled in, leaching out the potash, which was caught in an earthen pot by means of a spout at the bottom of the hopper. This liquid was sold to the ashery for cash. Often this was the only way pioneers had of raising ready money for taxes. At the ashery the liquid potash or lye was concentrated and shipped to soap factories.

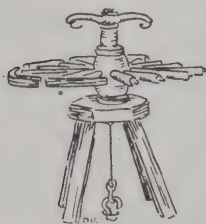
The next industries coming to Milan were a carding and fulling mill, a hat factory and two iron foundries and plow works. These have been mentioned in preceding pages. Harness makers, tin-smith, blacksmiths, saddlers, cabinet makers and wagon makers followed. The last and largest of the wagon makers was McMillen and Standish who came in 1834. The site of their factory already has been identified.



Ash Hopper

After these came the opening of the canal with its warehouses and shipyards which have been described. A rope walk (Canal Basin Lot No. 75) and a sail loft (over Henry Lockwood's hat factory) were adjuncts of the shipyards.

In 1843, a newspaper founded by Clark Waggoner and named The Milan Tribune was issued. It continued until 1851, when Waggoner founded The Toledo Commercial, later The Blade, in that city. After The Tribune, several short-lived weeklies came and went until The Milan Ledger was established in 1889. This paper was purchased in 1925 by Frank A. Day whose son, Ross Day, has published it since January 1931.



Wheelwright's Bench

In the late 1850's, A. J. Mowry began the manufacture of paint at the corner of West Front and Huron streets. Later, he sold to Sherwin-Williams who closed the factory. It, then, became a livery stable and finally a garage before the building was torn down.

In the 1880's, Stokes built a frame building in back of the Kelley Block and made shading pens. A decade later he went out of business and the building was dismantled. Three homes in Milan were constructed from its parts.

In the 1890's, the next to the last remaining warehouse, which stood on Lot 74, was converted to the use of a canning factory. The company ceased operations about the turn of the century. The building was torn down.

In the late 1880's, also, a well was drilled for oil near Lot 75. After drilling several hundred feet and getting only a small flow of gas, the venture was dropped.

Scholl's distillery and the Milan Brewery are described on pages 46 and 48 of this booklet.



Tile manufacturing was among the earliest industries of Milan Township. The first brick yard was on the old Ward farm. At Milan various tile and brick yards have operated. One was located near Village creek at Berlin street; another was on the old Pomeroy place (Laurence Peabody's) and a third was on the former Comstock farm (now Samaha's).

The present Lavey Pottery and Tile yards were opened about 1857. Albert Fish operated them around the turn of the century. In 1905, James Lavey, Sr. purchased them and continued as the Lavey Pottery until recently when it became a subsidiary of Stillwater Clay Products, Cleveland.

Harris Products was started at Milan in 1947. Two years later it was purchased by Clevite Corporation and in 1956 the name was changed to Clevite Harris Products. Last year this concern did over six million dollars worth of business and now has 102 employees. It manufactures rubber and metal suspension parts for the automotive industry as well as records for RCA and magnetic recording devices. Matthew J. Fleming, Jr. is president.

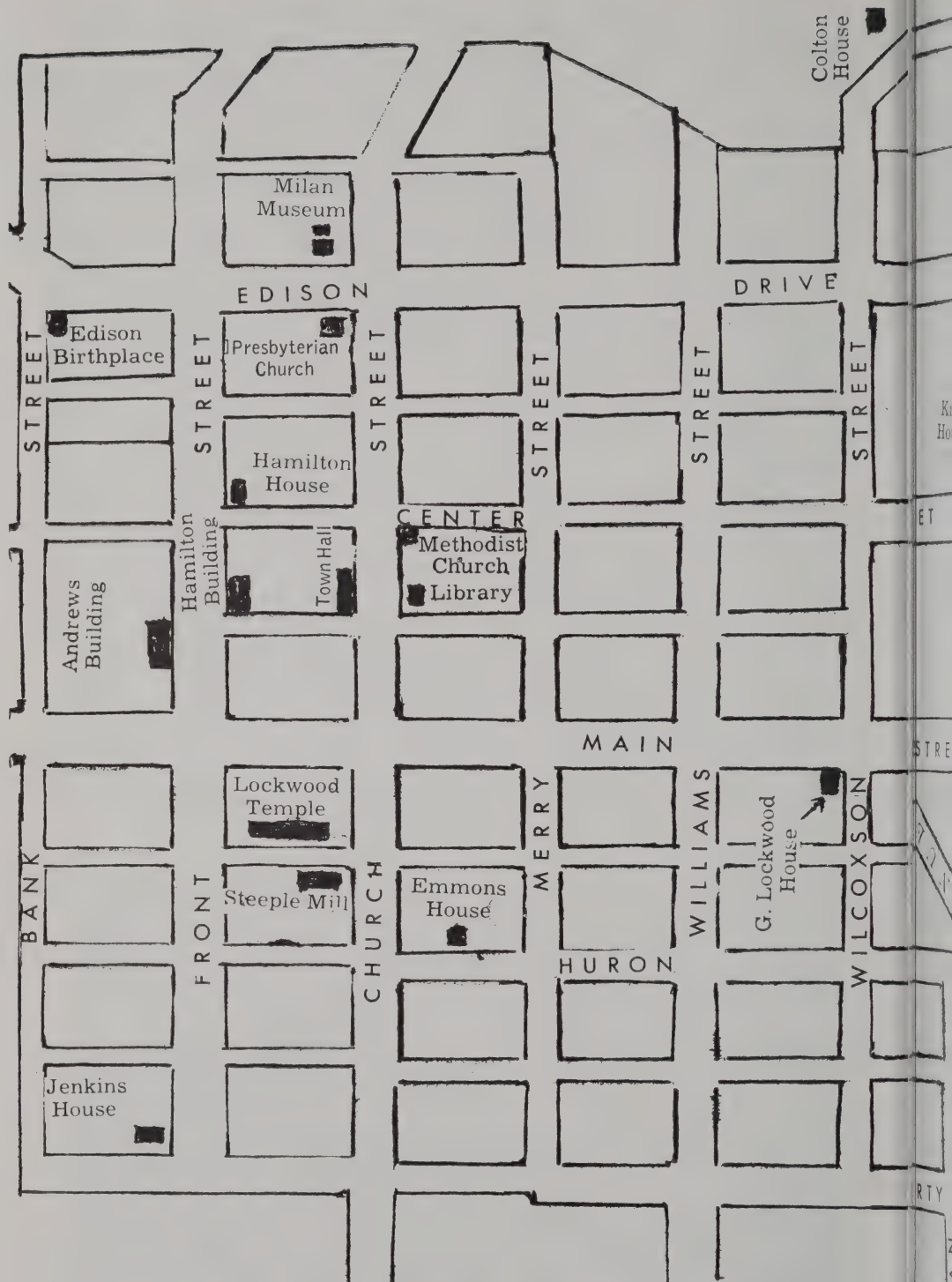
A more recent firm at Milan is the Milan Steel and Construction, Inc. They occupy the site of the old car barns and the former Butman foundry near the old Canal Basin. They are engaged in the sale and erection of steel buildings and machinery moving in related contracting and construction. Employing from 25 to 50 people, their payroll is \$350,000. President is Albert E. Wharff.

Incorporated in 1955 at Milan, the Growers Chemical Corp. is growing rapidly. Their product is based upon more than thirty years of research by the internationally-known chemist, Dr. Victor A. Tiedjens, and consists of chemical fertilizers, both for ground application and for spraying on foliage as a plant food. They also make planter attachments to increase the yield at less cost per acre. Their research laboratory here has as an objective increased profits for farmers and growers. J. P. Henry is president.



COURTESY MRS. WAYNE EMMONS

**Old Canning Factory**







## SHIP BUILDING AND TRANSPORTATION

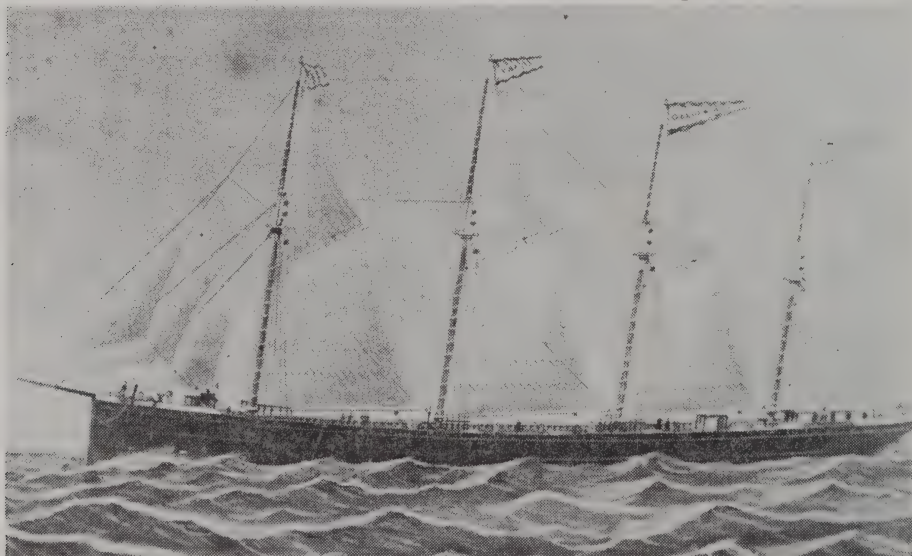


COURTESY MILAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

### **"Bones" of the Old Idaho**

On the north side of the basin were the shipyards. Between the years 1841 and 1867, more than 75 lake schooners and other craft were constructed. The Milan Tribune for November 9, 1843, states: "Several brigs and other sail have been built here within the last two years . . . ."

Details of Milan ship building may be found at the Public Library, together with the names of many of the vessels and the year in which they were built. Gay and Merry, J. C. Lockwood, A. P. and A. J. Mowry, Henry Kelley, Smith & Co., William Kline, Butman & Choate, and Valentine Fries built ships.



COURTESY MILAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

### **Schooner Golden Age**



Among the best-remembered of these vessels is the Idaho, built by A. J. Mowry at Milan in 1863. She sailed the Lakes until the panic of 1873, when she was laid up in the lower locks of the canal and never taken out. She went to pieces there until all that is left is the keel and a few bolts which held the ribs.

The last vessel built in the Milan yards was the Exile, in 1867. The next year the old dam went out in a flood and was never rebuilt. This was the last of the old Milan shipyards. Later, in 1878, Val Fries moved his yards to Fries Landing where the Charles W. Foster, the William G. Edwards, the Marion W. Page and the Golden Age were built. These were the last vessels built in Milan Township.

## RAILROADS

1761648

As long as the canal boomed, Milan capital had little or nothing to do with railroads. After wheat shipments were diverted by this newer means of transportation and canal traffic had declined almost to the vanishing point, Milan tried to turn to rail facilities, but it was too late.

In 1868, what was to be the New York Central surveyed a line through Milan, but gave it up in favor of Norwalk, where local capital was actively interested. It was not until the early 1870's that Milan turned, almost in desperation, to the then-projected Wheeling and Lake Erie.

Francis Lockwood, of Milan, actively promoted the line, which was narrow gauge, but lack of capital hampered construction. At one time the line was derisively christened the Wheelbarrow and Leg Weary railroad because newer methods of grading were too expensive.

However, the road was finally completed as far as Milan in 1877, the first train stopping at the foot of the Front street hill in



COURTESY MILAN HISTORICAL MUSEUM

First Train To Enter Milan—1877



COURTESY MRS. ROBT. SAYLES

### Milan Flats showing old bridge and interurban

the summer of that year. Later, in the 1880's, the railroad was reorganized and the present standard gauge constructed. The former narrow gauge roadbed may still be seen where it crossed Rattlesnake creek west of the village.

In 1882, the New York, Chicago and St. Louis, better known as the Nickel Plate, completed a line through the township two and



COURTESY ROBT. D. MCLANE

### Old High Wheeler

one-half miles north of Milan. An unincorporated village named Avery (not to be confused with Old Avery, the former county seat which already has been described) sprang up here. Manufacturing followed and the H. M. Aust Elevator, the Hoover Manufacturing Company and J. Schlessman & Sons, Inc. built along the right-of-way. Later Hoover sold to John Deere who suspended local operations. The plant is occupied today by the Celotex Corp. paper mill.

### LAKE SHORE ELECTRIC RY.

One of the earliest interurban lines in the United States connected Milan with Norwalk and Sandusky. This road, built in 1893, is said to have been the longest electric interurban line in this country at the time of its inception. Later, it became part of the Lake Shore Electric network, which in conjunction with other electric lines, covered Northern Ohio.

The line continued to operate through Milan until a severe ice storm in the spring of 1928 extensively damaged the



standing property and this portion of the line was abandoned. The Lake Shore Electric went into receivership and buses replaced the old electric cars in 1938. The old car barns, which had been located at Milan, were sold to private individuals. The Milan Steel & Construction Co. operates on the site, today.

### Bicycle Craze

In connection with transportation, the bicycle craze of the 1880's and 1890's should be mentioned. Cycling clubs were formed and bicycle paths constructed along many of the roads. With the coming of the automobile the fad passed into history.

### MILAN TODAY

While Milan did not live up to the expectations of its founders, it has become a pleasant village of homes. There is sufficient industry both in the village and within easy driving distance to employ its people. At the same time there is ample opportunity for quiet home life and the enjoyment of lawns and gardens. Its schools are above average, its people democratic and its pleasures simple and wholesome.

The Galpin Bird Sanctuary offers an unspoiled retreat for nature lovers, while the Edison Memorial Park will provide a more conventional recreation spot when it is completed.

The former Raccoon Farm, now a State Park, is within easy motoring distance from the village and the Milan Rod and Gun Club have a private artificial lake nearby.

Within the last decade Milan has nearly doubled in population and now has approximately 1200 inhabitants. The village limits have been extended to include real estate developments along Lockwood Avenue and Route 601. Other developments on Seminary Road and Perrin Road are growing rapidly and will, doubtless, become part of the village in the future.

All in all, for the home owner who is trying to get away from the turmoil of cities, Milan has much to offer.



COURTESY MRS. WAYNE EMMONS

The last stagecoach was used for years as a bus at Norwalk





Aerial View of Milan—1953

COURTESY MILAN PUBLIC LIBRARY





WHETHER YOU COME BY OX TEAM  
OR MOTOR CAR  
WE'LL BE GLAD TO SEE YOU AT THE

# Wonder Bar

*A hearty welcome to old Milanites  
and a cheery greeting to all visitors.*

*Meet your old friends and  
make new ones while  
enjoying our cool, inviting refreshments*

*Your pleasure is our business!*

*Sandwiches*

*Beer*

*Wine*

*Liquor*

Ann and L. J. Buckley

Proprietors





COURTESY A. J. BEECKLEY

OLDEST KNOWN PICTURE in Milan taken in 1865 in front of the old Eagle Tavern. Note Civil War veterans still in uniform. The boy, second from the right, is William A. Galpin, a successful industrialist who donated the Galpin Bird Sanctuary to the village as well as memorabilia now in the Milan Museum.

Other figures in the picture have been identified and their names may be obtained at the Milan Museum. The list had to be omitted here because of space limitations. The dog, although evidently well known at the time, was doomed to anonymity by careless reporting.

*Growers of*  
**Fine Melons**

**JOHN MILLER & SONS**

Route 113—3 miles East

**CRECELIUS BROTHERS**

Bryan Road—Northwest of Town

**PAUL KURTZ & SON**

Route 250—1 mile North

- PETE MORTENSEN & SON—see advt. page 34
- ED STENGER & SONS—see advt. on page 41



---

# Ledger Printing Co.

---

Publishers of THE MILAN LEDGER, Milan's  
local newspaper. Phone your news to 9-2441.

---

## Job Printing of All Kinds

BOOKLETS

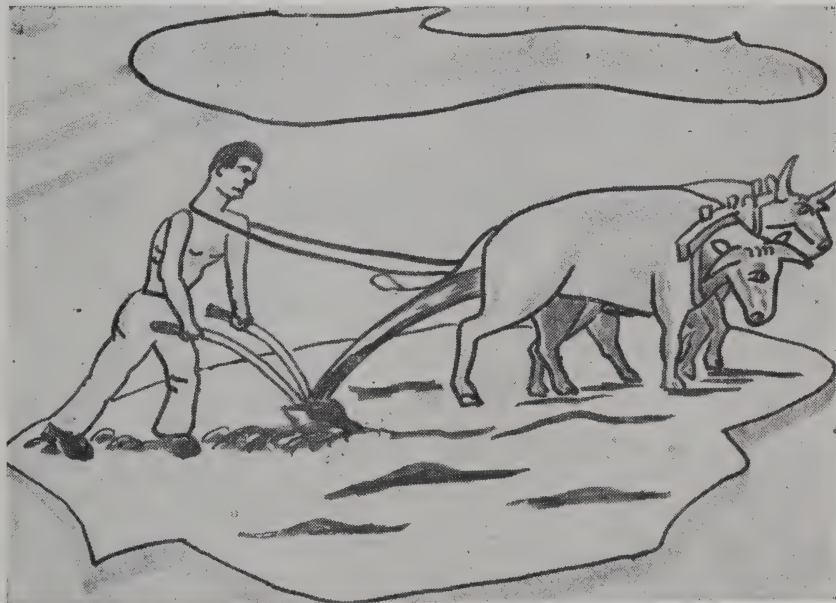
PROGRAMS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

*We can do it the way you want it done!*

Call on us at 19 East Church Street

Phone 9-2441



# P. Mortensen & Son

*Quality Produce and Flowers*

3 miles east of Milan on Route 113

Phones 9-3733 & 9-3737

---



COURTESY MRS. WAYNE EMMONS

OLD TOWN HALL, built 1876 and destroyed in the fire of 1888 when the South Block and adjacent homes as far east as Center Street, as well as the old Presbyterian church were burned. Note the fence around the Public Square and the size of the trees in the Park. The frame building at the left of the Hall is the Klinge-felt saloon, a well-known Milan landmark which was torn down about the time the rest rooms were built. It was saved from destruction during the fire of 1888 as is told on page 44.

## *Grace Dickerson*

INTERIOR DECORATIONS

Shop 9-2431

12 Main Street

Milan, Ohio

Residence 22 West Church St. — Phone 9-2021

Compliments of

## **COMET DRY CLEANERS**

164 Milan Avenue

NORWALK

Phone 2-3055

## **HENRY BEHRENDSEN**

Plastering Contractor — Free Estimates

77 Main Street

Milan, Ohio

Phone 9-2055

## **CARLSON INSURANCE AGENCY**

*Automobile — General — Surety Bonds*

102 Center Street

MILAN, OHIO

Phone 9-3411



---

---

# C. L. Howells Real Estate Org.

Realtor Since 1948

**On the Square — Milan, Ohio**

PHONE 9-4285

Business Opportunities

*Homes, Farms, Lots, Appraisals*

**SALES REPRESENTATIVES**

Joseph P. Stiert  
Alberta L. Moore

Ralph E. Rosekelly  
William A. Knight

REAL ESTATE IS OUR BUSINESS EXCLUSIVELY

---

## **COPLEY INSURANCE AGENCY, INC.**

45 EAST FRONT STREET — MILAN, OHIO

*Complete Insurance Coverage*

**ALL FORMS OF LIABILITY**

- FIRE
- HOUSEHOLD
- HAIL

- CASUALTY
- AUTOMOBILE
- SURETY BONDS

President  
FRANK COPLEY  
SANDUSKY, OHIO



Vice-President  
RUSSELL DORR  
MILAN AGENT

Office Phone 9-4285

Residence Phone 9-2012

---

---



COURTESY MILAN HISTORICAL MUSEUM

OLD TOWN HALL after the fire. The walls, only slightly damaged were incorporated in the new building to which a clocktower was added. During the fire, Klingefelt, who owned a saloon beside the Hall, brought out a keg of whisky for the firemen. His old frame building was saved.

---

# Dari-Bar

Frank Goodman, owner

**4 Main Street – Milan, Ohio**

FOUNTAIN SERVICE

Breakfast - Lunches - Dinners

DELICATESSEN

*May We Serve You?*

---



---

---

# *Rawle Funeral Home*

FAY M. KRAMER, *Funeral Director*

Milan, Ohio

24 HOUR AMBULANCE SERVICE

---

---

## **Milan Steel & Construction Co., Inc.**

*General Contractors*

MILAN  
OHIO

PHONE  
MILAN 9-2953

---

---



COURTESY MRS. WAYNE EMMONS

THE BRICK BREWERY, built in 1904. Note chute to icehouse at the right. The building replaced a frame one erected for Anton Herb and sons about 1870. A stock company directed by Robert Streck bought the property in 1904, retaining Joseph Herb as brewmaster. The building is now occupied by the Growers Chemical Corporation.

---

*Growers*  
**CHEMICAL CORPORATION**  
**MILAN, OHIO**

Fertilizer Solutions

Equipment

OUR RESEARCH IS YOUR PROFIT

---



---

# ANDY'S RESTAURANT

## *Flamingo* NIGHT CLUB

We welcome old Milanites and our new visitors.

### *The Flamingo Room*

will be open for your convenience  
Saturday night, September 5th,  
and we are glad to cooperate in  
making this a memorable Home-  
coming and Melon Festival.

For the people you meet—and the food you eat

WHEN YOU EAT OR DRINK

### *Make It Andy's*

★ Steaks   ★ Chops   ★ Fish   ★ Specials

LIQUOR

BEER

WINE

Mary and Frank Zadell, Props.

---



COURTESY A. J. BEECKLEY

Joseph Herb, John Beeckley, Charley Herb, and John Coyne beside the old frame brewery. This building replaced an earlier erected by John Scholl who brewed beer at Milan as early as 1850. Scholl continued to operate a distillery on the premises after he sold the brewery. At the turn of the century Milan beer was acclaimed for its excellence. The Herb brothers also built a dam across the ravine south of the brewery which impounded spring water and made the pond to be seen today.

---

# Clevite Harris Products, Inc.

UNIT OF CLEVITE CORPORATION

- Rubber-Metal Products
  - Bearings • Bushings
  - Mounts • Sleeves
  - Molded Shapes

**Lockwood Road**

**Milan, Ohio**



---

---

# Ed Stenger & Sons

Route 113 East

*Flowers - Fruits - Vegetables*

WHOLESALE — RETAIL

Phone 9-3387

---

# Walter O. Karnes & Sons

11 West Church St. MILAN Phone 9-2111

*Feeds — Seeds — Fertilizers*

Dog - Cat and Bird Foods and Supplies

Garden Tools — Charcoal Briquets

Lawn, Garden and Flower Plant Foods and Seeds

Weed Killers — Dust Spray Materials

Hay — Straw — Ground Cobs — Peat Moss — Fencing

---

---



COURTESY A. J. BEECKLEY

THE LITTLE GERMAN BAND. Top row: (left to right) Peter Fox, John Beeckley, Anthony Beeckley, Henry Beeckley; bottom row (left to right) unknown member, Beckler, and Herman Collman. The picture was taken in 1866.

Portraits  
Commercial

Weddings  
Candid & Formal

*Ewell*



*Studio*

PHONE 9-3354

Photofinishing  
Color—Black and White

Kelley Block  
Milan, Ohio



*Compliments of*

# **Bill's Sohio Service**

---

**PHONE 9-4151**

---

**William Weilnau**

**Edward Heckelman**

---

## **PARK AVERY GROCERY**

H. Schwinn, owner

**Home of Good Cheese**

**Avery, Ohio**

---

## **RYDER'S GULF SERVICE**

**at Sandusky-Norwalk Ohio Turnpike Interchange**

Free Pick-up and Delivery—Phone Milan 9-3151

---

## **40 WINKS MOTEL**

Exit 7 Ohio Turnpike — Phone Milan 9-4411

**Restaurant and Swimming Pool**

**Aircraft Landing Facilities**

---

## **DAVE'S SOHIO — Avery, Ohio**

**First Station North of Ohio Turnpike on Routes 250 - 13**



COURTESY MRS. K. D. MITCHELL

THE LAST OF THE OLD STAR MILL. This old building was built in 1849 by Samuel and Thomas Winchester. Samuel was also a balloonist. He made his first flight from the Milan Public Square in September 1855. Three weeks later he arose from Benedict's Pasture, Norwalk, was carried by the wind over Berlinville and was never heard from afterward. His fate is still a mystery. Later, Comfort Ruggles and then Hanson owned the property. It burned in 1909. The buildings seen at the left are the old coal yard and the last old warehouse, property of the Bagley Lumber Company today. Some of the small sheds shown here were torn down at a later date. The fire was a local event of importance.

---

Over Half A Century of Service to Milan

## **G. T. MORROW CO.**

1 West Front Street

PLUMBING

—

HEATING

—

SHEET METAL

---

## **Porter Ford Co.**

Telephone Milan 9-2263    Front & Center

MILAN, OHIO

---



---

---

# Milan Auto Supply

*Fleet-Wing*

**GASOLINE and FUEL OIL**

DISTRIBUTOR

**Pontiac** SALES AND SERVICE

40 Front Street

---

## Clayton Meyers

GENERAL REPAIR

**Farm and Industrial Equipment**

**J. I. Case** Sales and Service

PHONE MILAN 9-4771

ROUTE 113 EAST

---

---



COURTESY DON BURLEY

SEELEY'S STORE about 1904. Front: (left to right) Job Seeley, Frank Britton, Peter Lawrence, Robt. Rikeman, Steve Cummins. Rear: (left to right) Link Olney, Pick Truett, Louis Keene, and Fred Collman (with bag).

## **R. J. KELLER—Painting Contractor**

*Exterior — Interior — Brush — Spray*

90 Edison Drive

Milan, Ohio

## **W. C. ROBBINS — Building Contractor**

Residential — Light Commercial — Remodeling & Repairs

212 Seminary Road

Phone 9-2894

## **E. F. FITCH—Plumbing & Heating**

Phone 9-3052

MILAN, O.

68 Edison Drive



FINE  
FRUITS  
AND  
VEGETABLES

**JOE PUSATERI**

PHONE  
9-2381  
15 LOCKWOOD  
AVENUE

**MILAN USED CAR CENTER**

14 Lockwood Road

Milan, Ohio

Telephone 9-3681

**REED'S GULF SERVICE**

Corner Lockwood & Main Street

Milan, Ohio

**C. R. Keller — Automobile Painting**

Same location since 1924

MILAN

Phone 9-3801

CEMENT WORK

BRICK - SANDSTONE

**C. "Pete" Vanderpool**

PHONE 9-3802

GENERAL CONTRACTOR

MILAN, OHIO

MACHINE SHOP - WELDING - REPAIR WORK

**MILAN METAL PRODUCTS**

Phone 9-3721

Route 113 East

Milan, Ohio

**H. M. AUST ELEVATOR**

Grain — Coal — Feed — Farm Supplies

Avery, Ohio

Compliments of

**Hunter Haynes**



COURTESY MRS. WAYNE EMMONS

HAEUPTLE'S POOL HALL in 1908. (left to right) Elmer Smith, Herman Sickinger, John Martin, Wayne Emmons, Leland Dimon, Will Haeuptle, Dwight Morrow, Hick Britton, Ray Steiert, Joe Haeuptle, Cliff Sickinger, and Marcus O'Leary. The old pool hall was a Milan landmark and served as a gathering place for local men-about-town in the earlier decades of this century.

# MILAN HARDWARE CO.

## General Hardware

### Zenith

RADIO

TV

STEREO

### Kelvinator

Refrigerators

Ranges

Washers & Dryers

Air-Conditioning

MILAN, OHIO -- PHONE 9-3361



---

# Lockwood, Smith & Co.

*General Merchandise*


-----  
ESTABLISHED 1863  
-----

C. W. Huber


C. J. Rockwell

---

**MAY WE HELP YOU?**



**BUILD**



**REMODEL**



**FINANCE**

*FREE DELIVERY*

• **J. I. CASE TRACTOR DEALER**

## **Erie County Lumber**

**1505 MILAN ROAD      SANDUSKY, OHIO**

**CALL US COLLECT — MAin 6-5124**

---



COURTESY MRS. ROBT. SAYLES

MILAN BALL TEAM of 1909. Top row: (left to right) "Sticks" Seniff, Adam Schunk, Speigal, Job Seeley, Ralph Dimon, Ralph Steiert, Herman Sickinger, and Art Smith. Bottom row: (left to right) Geo. Steiert, Bob Sickinger, Louis Dorr, Oscar Hettle, and Elmer Smith, who later played ball with the old Cleveland Naps. The ups and downs of various Milan teams in the early 1900's were followed avidly by local fans and fights were not uncommon. In those virile days an umpire was expected to back up his decisions with his fists or quit the game.

## Milan Public Library

WE HAVE BOOKS to suit every taste. A reference room well stocked with the information you may want . . . And we are glad to give friendly service.

When in Doubt — Consult Your Library

Phone 9-2561

East Church Street



---

---

# J. Schlessman & Sons, Inc.

Avery, Ohio

Ph. Milan 9-2161

*For Best Yields*

**Plant Schlessman Superior Hybrids**

ALSO: Seed Wheat - Barley - Oats



*For Milan Homecoming  
and Melon Festival*

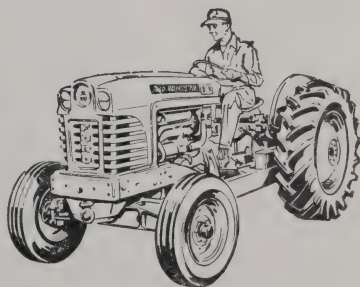
**Be Progressive with  
Ford Tractors and Equipment**

**A.J. Romp Tractor Sales**

Corner Route 250 and Mason Road

Phone Milan 9-2620

AVERY, OHIO





COURTESY ROBT. D. MCLANE

WATER FIGHT at Milan Homecoming, 1910. The event took place in front of the Kelley Block and fire hoses were used. Note that the site of the present library is vacant, just as it was left after the fire of 1888 destroyed the old blacksmith shop which formerly stood there.

---

## KORNER STORE

*Delicatessen*

*Sealtest Ice Cream*

LIGHT LUNCHES

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

AMERICAN GREETING CARDS

15 Main Street

Phone 9-2661



---

---

*Visit*  
**Milan Historical Museum**

An early Colonial house  
filled with the things of yesterday.

A blacksmith shop and other  
interesting exhibits.

**OPEN APRIL 15 TO NOV. 15**

Hours: 1 to 5 except Monday

---

**THE  
CHAMBER OF  
COMMERCE  
OF MILAN**

*proudly joins this  
great celebration*

**MILAN'S BUSINESS ORGANIZATION**

---

---



COURTESY ROBT. D. MCLANE

AT THE RACES, Milan Homecoming, 1910. These were held on the Public Square along the old interurban tracks on Main Street. At that time the town was gaily decorated and old Normal School graduates came from far and wide to pay their respects to their Alma Mater. The school was torn down that year.

## *Len's Barber Shop*

East Front Street

Milan, Ohio

Compliments of

## *Milan Beauty Shop*

51 Front Street

Phone 9-2731

Barbara Hainline, prop.

## **STRONG'S SERVICE STATION**

Phone 9-2442

Milan, Ohio

## **ROCKWELL REPAIR**

Milan, Ohio

Phone 9-2671



Compliments of

## **Bagley Lumber Co.**

PHONE 9-3061

## **Dorr Chevrolet Co.**

CHEVROLET *Sales and Service*

In Business 33 Years as a Chevrolet Dealer

## **MILAN BARBER SHOP**

5 MAIN STREET

John Nistetter

Jim Witter

FOR A LOVELIER YOU,

## *Ideal Beauty Salon*

5 Park Street (above Hardware) Phone 9-4221 Irene Sanders, prop.

## **FOX MARKET – Meats & Groceries**

Phone 9-3351

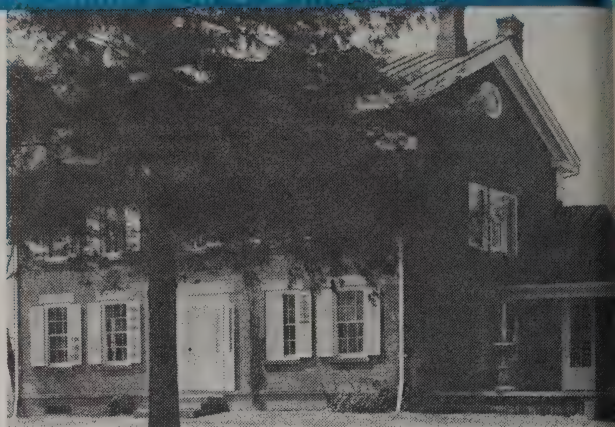
Front Street

Milan, Ohio

Interested in Real Estate  
in the Beautiful and Historic Milan area?

**Consult: CRING REALTY CO.**

FORMER HOME  
OF  
PHILO S. COMSTOCK  
BUILT 1840

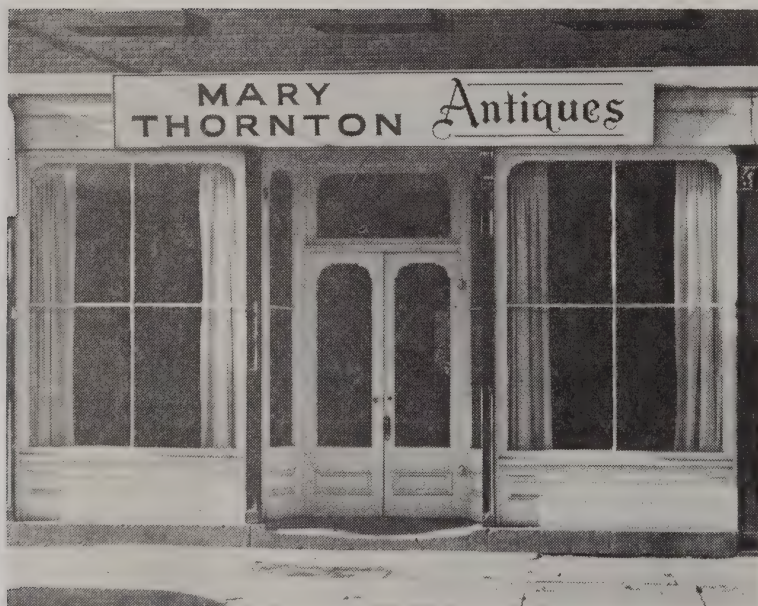


*Samaba's*  
*Early American Antiques*  
OLD STATE ROAD—*North* NORWALK, OHIO



Mary Thornton Antiques

Public Square — Milan, Ohio



American  
Antiques

—|||—  
Primitives

—|||—  
Collectors'  
Items





Neighborly Banking

We Salute Milan

on the occasion of its 1959

## Homecoming and Melon Festival

-----  
You'll Like Banking with Us  
for Friendly and Courteous Service  
-----

# The Erie County Bank

OFFICES AT

MILAN, OHIO

VERMILION, OHIO





THE INN OF FINE FOODS

*"McPhail's"*

# Milan Inn

"WIK"

*Delicious* STEAK, SEAFOOD  
and Chicken Dinners served  
promptly. Separate dining room  
may be reserved for parties by  
phone—dinner selection for par-  
ties to suit the occasion if arrange-  
ments are made a day in advance.

*Our Rooms* ARE TASTE-  
fully decorated and murals in the  
main dining room depict high-  
lights in the life and work of  
THOMAS A. EDISON, as inter-  
preted by an Italian-born and in-  
ternationally-known artist and  
sculptor—Ugo Graziotti.

*Steaks*

*Chicken*

*Seafood*

11:00 a.m. to 2 p.m.

4:00 p.m. to 8 p.m.

EVERY DAY EXCEPT MONDAY

THE INN OF FINE FOODS

29 East Church Street

Phone 2-3291

Milan, Ohio

5674















